



Leveraging American Rescue Plan Resources in Response to COVID

State Special Education Leaders and Staff
April 28, 2021

Today's Agenda

- Unpacking the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act
- Questions and Reflections
- ARP Opportunities and Challenges
- Final Questions and Reflections

Objectives

- Provide an overview of the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) aid package.
- Identify emerging trends that will inform LEA strategy, planning, and resource choices to support learning recovery efforts for all students
- Allow time for district leaders to discuss implications and seek clarification

Presenters

Jason Willis



Director, Resource Planning
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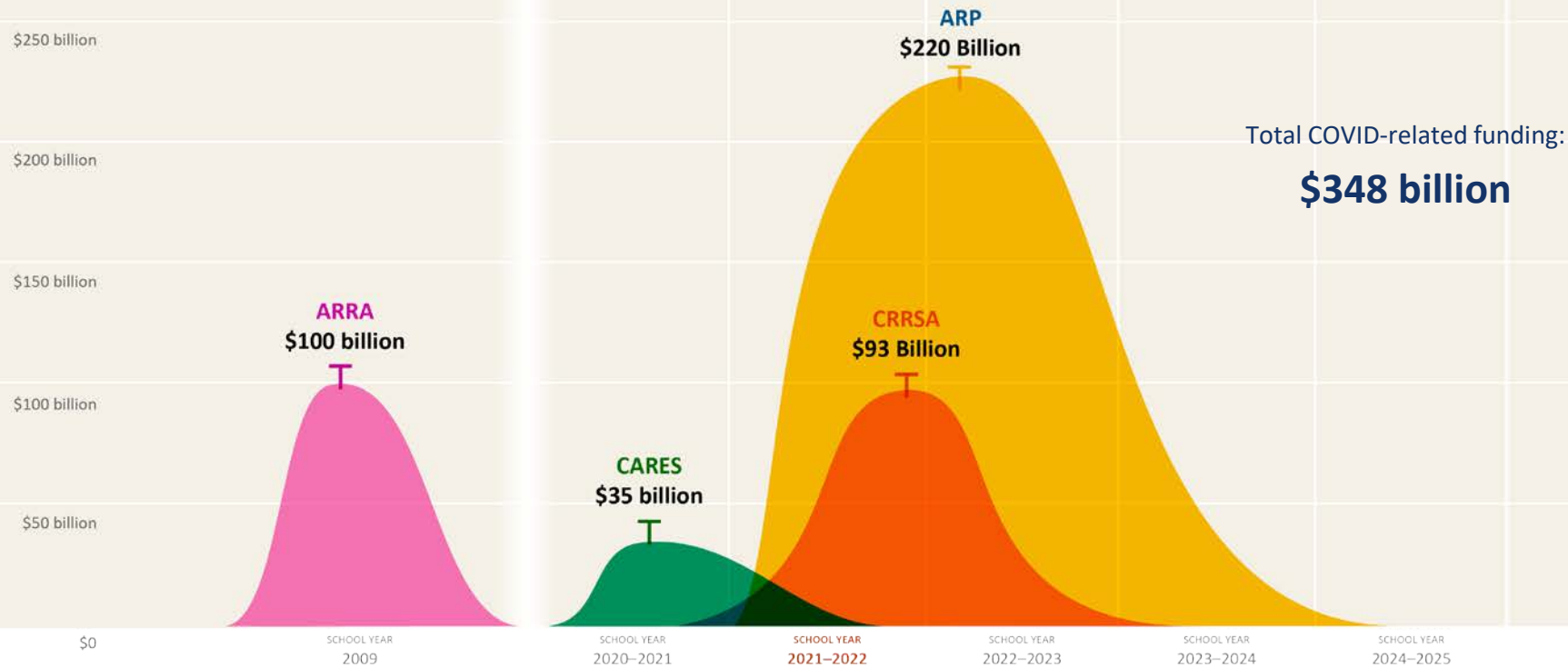
Unpacking the American Rescue Plan: Intended Use and Considerations

*Augustus Mays
Director of Government
Relations at WestEd*

The American Rescue Plan

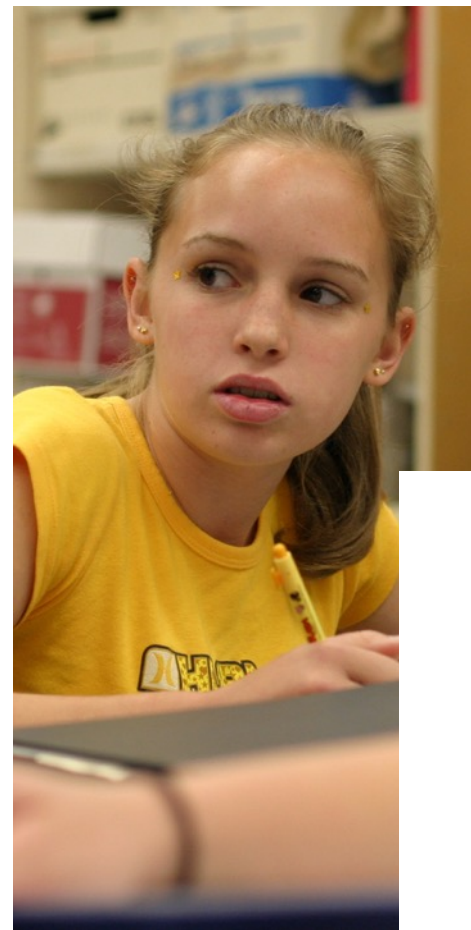
- On March 11, Congress passed a **\$1.9 trillion pandemic emergency response** bill titled the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 or ARP.
- The long-awaited bill provides approx. **\$220 billion in education aid** with approx. \$130 billion of this aid targeted to K-12 education.
- Congress intends for district leaders to use these funds to address short-term needs associated with the pandemic and to invest in the structural changes that will, over the long term, make schools more equitable and whole-child focused.

An Unparalleled Investment in Education and Child Care



Breakdown of Education Investments in the ARP

Early Childhood Education	\$40 billion *includes CCDBG, Head Start, and IDEA part C, and IDEA part B section 619
K-12 Education	\$130 billion *includes IDEA part B, BIE, and outlying areas
E-Rate: Emergency Connectivity Fund	\$7 billion
Total Federal Funding	\$177 billion



American Rescue Plan

Education Stabilization Fund Allocation: *\$165 Billion*

Similarities with CARES and CRSSA

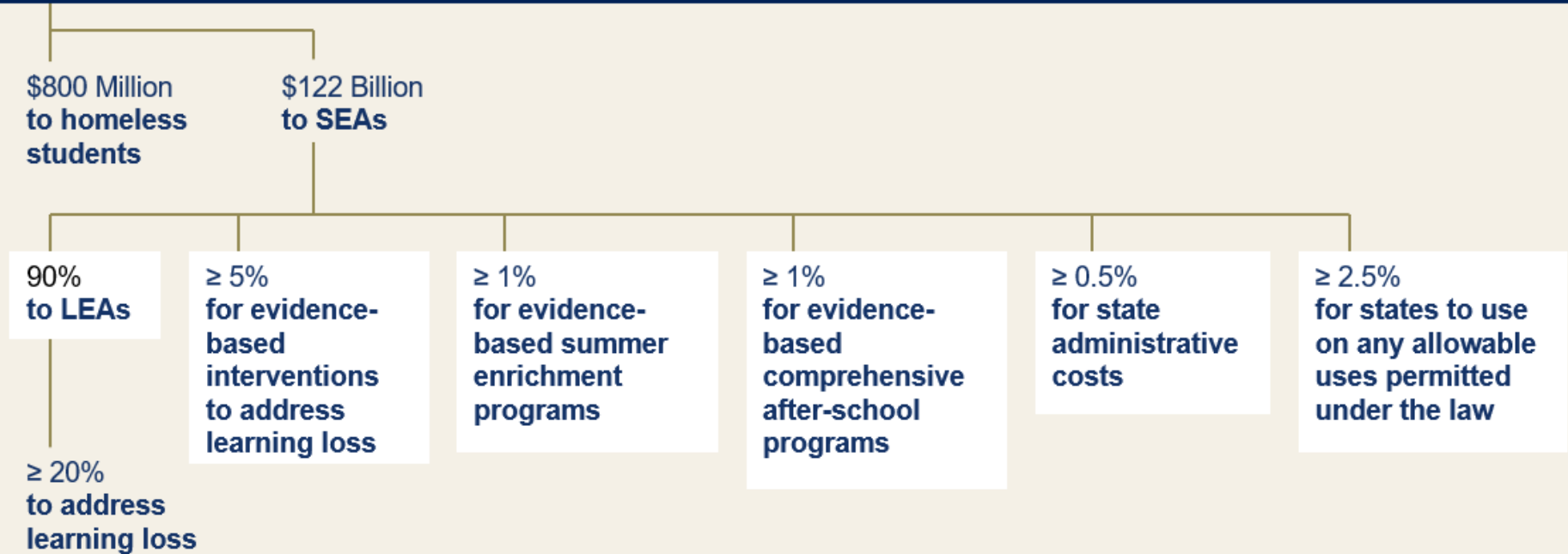
- Uses CARES Act's Education Stabilization Fund provisions, with modifications, to distribute funding.
- As with CARES, provides discretionary education resources to SEAs and LEAs through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund and to higher education institutions through the Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEER) Fund.

Major differences from CARES and CRRSA

- State/Local Stabilization: \$350 billion in funding for state, local, tribal governments via Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Fund. Used for public health emergency, negative economic impacts from COVID.
- No Governors Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund

American Rescue Plan

K-12 State and District Level Allocation (ESSER III): *\$122.8 Billion*



American Rescue Plan

LEA Allowable Use for K12 Education Funding

ESSER III Allowable Uses: Similar to what is present in CARES and CRRSA relief packages

- **Additional Staff Compensation**, e.g., to address recruitment/retention challenges, to incentivize effective teachers to move to schools most impacted by COVID
- **Transportation**, e.g., increase social distancing to transport students during regular school year, extended time, and/or summer programs
- **High-Quality Instructional Materials and Curricula or Related Professional Development**, e.g., evidence-based K-2 districtwide reading curriculum and related professional development to address **unfinished** learning and accelerate early literacy skills

American Rescue Plan

LEA Allowable Use for K12 Education Funding (continued)

- **Academic recovery to address learning loss and accelerated learning initiatives**, e.g., extended-time or extended-year initiatives, changing school master schedules to promote accelerated learning and access to effective teachers, and high-quality high-dose tutoring
- **Mental health warning systems and counseling for students and staff**
- **Broadband and device access**, e.g., planning for implementing activities during long-term closures, including online learning, and adequate and inclusive instruction for all students
- **School facilities and infrastructure costs to reduce health risks**, e.g., acquisition of real property or modular classrooms to increase social distancing, construction and/or renovation costs to existing structures

American Rescue Plan

K-12 Education: Provision for the Maintenance of Effort and Equity

Effort: States continue to fund K-12 education at least at the proportional levels as the average annual funding FY2017-19.

State Equity Provision: In FY22 and FY23, high-need school districts are protected from states' spending reductions:

1. State per-pupil funding for the neediest half of districts cannot be reduced by an amount that exceeds the overall decrease in state funds.
2. Per-pupil state funding for the 20% of districts with the highest percentage of low-income students not reduced below pre-pandemic levels (FY19).

LEA Equity Provision: LEAs shall not decrease either per-pupil funding or staffing levels for their high-poverty schools by an amount that exceeds districtwide reductions. The act defines "high-poverty schools" as the 25% of schools serving the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the LEA. Some exemptions are allowable under the act:

- LEAs fewer than 1,000 students; single school LEAs
- LEA could seek an exemption from the U.S. Secretary of Education if demonstrate "an exceptional or uncontrollable circumstance" like a huge drop in its financial resources.

SEA's Reserve and Use of Funds

Key State Considerations

Target investments to accelerate learning for students in greatest need

- Which students do we hope to serve? What are our goals?
- How can we combine the funds to meet the goals?
- What mechanisms should we build in to ensure student effects and success?
- How are we going to balance between recurring and one-time expenses?
- Which stakeholders should we seek input from to ensure the investments we make match the needs of students and have feasibility for success?





Questions



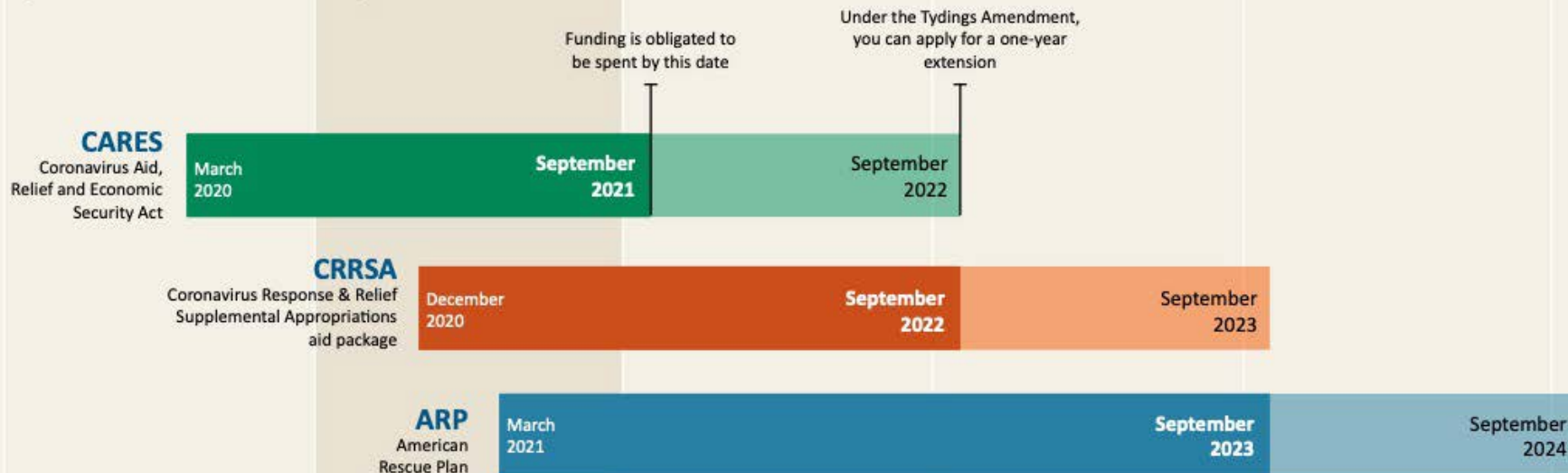
ARP Opportunities and Challenges: Guidance and Support to Meet the Moment

*Jason Willis, Director
Resource Planning at WestEd*

*We are so anxious to get back to normal that we have forgotten that **normal wasn't good enough** for our lowest-performing students.*



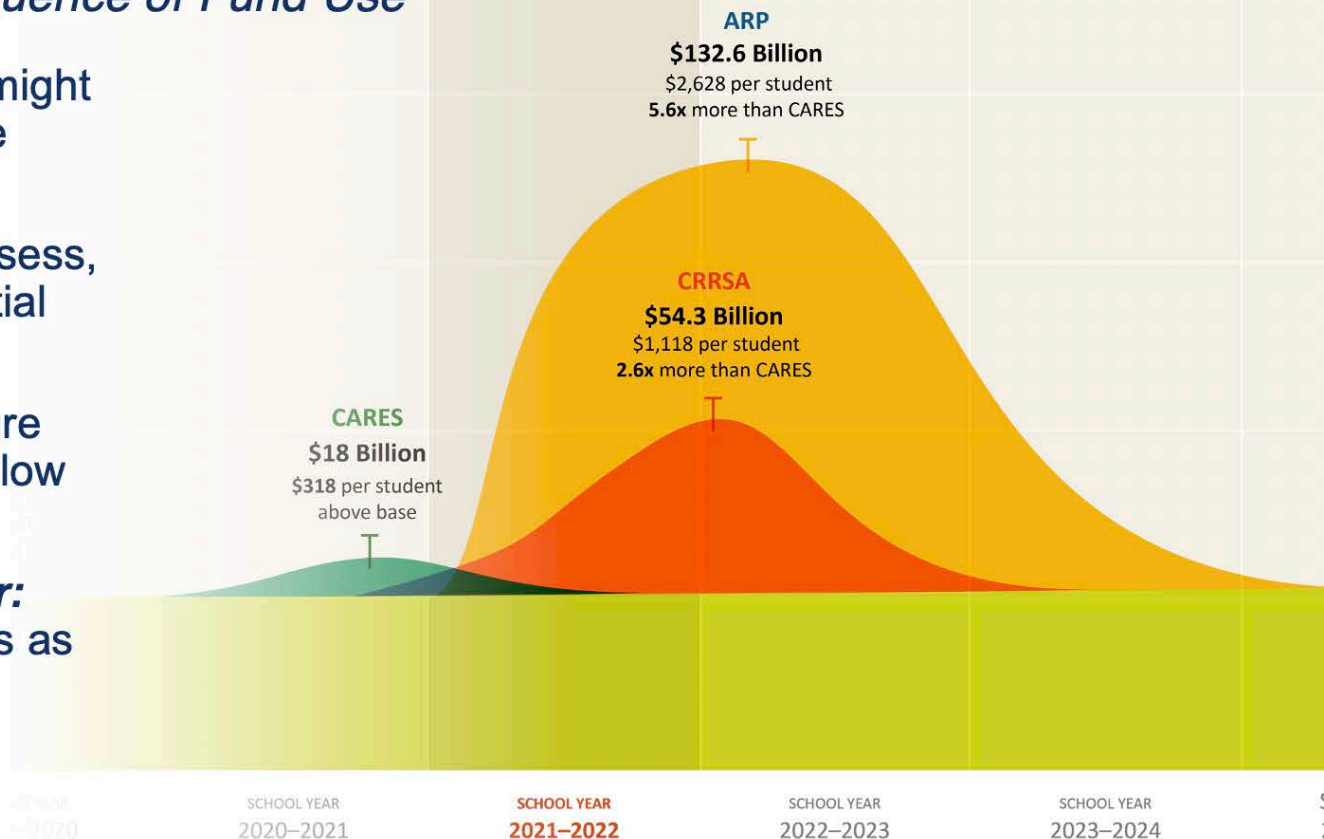
When do you need to spend the money?



“Ramp Up, Ramp Down”

Unpacking Time, Sequence of Fund Use

- Model of how funds might be applied across the available timeline
- **Ramp Up:** Needs assess, plan construction, initial allocations
- **Ramp Down:** Measure capacity increase, follow wind down plan
- **Confounding Factor:** Enrollment decreases as consequence of the pandemic



Approaches for Segmenting Fund Use

Addressing Infrastructure

- Hardware and Software (3 – 4 years lifecycle)
- Building upgrades and maintenance (10 – 15 years lifecycle)

One-time / Non-recurring

Confronting Challenges

How SEAs Can Capitalize on the Moment

- One-time revenues for ongoing expenditures
 - Build models, explainers to transition those funds
- Intentionally plan for sustainability to ongoing federal, state and local funding streams
 - Create the time and space for local leaders to ***prioritize, braid resources, and focus on at-risk student needs***
- Build the narrative that communicates what is helping students and that the federal investment is working
 - Measure, document, and disseminate the good use of taxpayer resources



State Equitable Distribution of Funds

State Equity Provision: In FY22/FY23, high-need school districts are protected from states' spending reductions:

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LEA Equitable Distribution of Funds

- **Equity Provision:** LEAs shall not decrease either **per-pupil funding** or **staffing levels** for their high-poverty schools by an amount that exceeds districtwide reductions.
- Keep the intent of the provision central in your planning, resource mapping and allocation.
- Calculations based on per pupil funding or staffing levels can result in very different results.
- The provision is a floor and doesn't regard systems that are adding funding above a maintained base of funding.

Funds for local post-COVID recovery are drawn through many different sources.

Federal UNITED STATES

State CALIFORNIA

Local FRESNO COUNTY



National Lunch Program

ESSER II Formula

ESSER II Set-aside

CCDBG Funds

CRF Funds

CRF Funds

CRF Funds

CRF Funds

HEER Funds

Fresno County Cradle to Career

Has been able to provide pandemic support including Food Distribution, Early Childhood Education, and Community Public Health Supports (Testing, Contact Tracing, Education) through funding from multiple sources.




Sources: U.S. Government, *USAspending.gov*; Fresno Cradle to Career, *Meeting the Moment*.
<https://fresnoc2c.org/files/2021-02/C2C-2020-MeetingTheMoment.pdf>

ESSER — Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
CCDBG — Child Care & Development Block Grant (via the CARES act)
CRF — Coronavirus Relief Funds (via the CARES act)
HEER — Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (via the CARES act)

Striding Towards In-Person Instruction

Opportunities for LEAs

CHALLENGE

-  A tsunami of student mental and behavioral health challenges is knocking on the doorstep of public schools
-  LEAs must contend with high-stakes LEA MOE fiscal requirements of IDEA as well as maintenance of equity provisions.
-  States and LEAs must define and determine who will receive, provide and pay for compensatory services.

OPPORTUNITY

- SEAs can facilitate conversations with state health care and social service agencies to coordinate professionals to support students
- LEAs will need to run scenarios of meeting both MOE requirements to understand their potential options.
- Invest recovery and economic aid funds in systems that differentiate resources and supports by student need.



Questions?



Final Reflections





Thank you!

More Information or to Request TA: ncsi@wested.org

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